A

SERMON

Preach'd before the

KING

AT

St. *JAMES*'s, April 16. 1696.

Being a Day of Publick Thankſgiving for the Diſcovery of a Horrid Deſign to Aſſaſſinate His Majeſty's Perſon: And for the Deliverance of the Nation from a *French* Invaſion.

By the Right Reverend Father in God,
JOHN Lord Biſhop of NORWICH.

Publiſhed by His Majeſty's Special Command.

LONDON:
Printed for **Will. Rogers**, at the *Sun*, over-againſt St. *Dunſtan*'s Church in *Fleetſtreet*. MDCXCVI.

The Bishop of *NORWICH*'s

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PSALM L. 15.

——I will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorify me.

THE Goodneſs of God, which inclined him to create ſo great a number of Beings, of whoſe Service he could have no want, having all Perfections contained in his own Nature, and eſſential to it, moved him, ever ſince they did exiſt, to preſerve them.

Among the Creatures of ſeveral Kinds and Ranks which God brought into the World, to ſome he gave a Capacity to diſcover his Being, and that he was the Maker of all things, and did conſerve

and govern them; who by considering the Works of his Creation, and either viewing them singly, or comparing them together, must discern Wise Design, Exact Order, Mutual Fitness and Subserviency one to another, every where among them, and thence necessarily conclude, that the Author of all these Productions is endued with Infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness; and that it is most reasonable for them who have receiv'd so Noble a Nature from him, to reverence, love, and honour him for it.

But what he did enable his Creatures to find out by their Reasoning Faculties, he has manifested more fully to them by Revelation; as well what concerns the Excellency of his own Nature, as what relates to them, and their Dependency upon him.

He has taught them, that he is their Sovereign Lord, of whom they hold all, and that it is their Duty to worship and praise him for his Loving-kindness; that as he only can furnish them with the common Supports of Life, so they are to pray to him for them; that as he will rescue them out of danger, so they ought humbly to recommend themselves to his Care and Protection; and after he has made a way for their Escape, heartily to return him Thanks for their Deliverance.

Thus to be grateful to our Principal Benefactor, is not only agreeable to Natural Light and Justice,

but

but the great Law of our Religion. *I will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorify me.*

In the Text theſe Two Propoſitions are plainly contained.

(1.) That Deliverances are from God.

(2.) That it is our Duty to glorify and honour him for them.

In treating of the firſt, I will ſhew (1.) That all Deliverances are from God.

(2.) That ſome are more evidently ſo, as having the plain and viſible Marks of his Hand impreſs'd upon them.

(1.) That all Deliverances are from God: Before I enter upon the Proof of which, I would premiſe (1.) That this Aſſertion does not imply, That God will deliver us, if we do nothing our ſelves towards obtaining our Safety; he has promiſed that his Grace ſhall attend and promote our honeſt Endeavours, but gives no ground to the idle and negligent to hope for his help, who will make no uſe of their Natural Powers derived from him for their own Preſervation.

(2.) Neither from hence does it follow, That God will encourage men in the pains they themſelves take to get out of Trouble, if they do not humbly addreſs to him for his help; *The calling upon him in the day of trouble*, being the expreſs Condition upon which he will deliver us.

(3.) Nor though men pray vehemently to God, have they the leaſt reaſon to expect he will fetch them out of thoſe Dangers they have run themſelves into, by being engaged in any wicked Deſign. Should Robbers, Pyrates, Murderers, Aſſaſſines, Traytors to their King and Countrey, pray for the Succeſs of their Villany, and that they may eſcape the Stroke of Juſtice, God would be ſo far from granting their Petitions, that he would take their Prayers for a new Injury and Affront, and abhor their Sacrifice as much as their Sin.

4. Neither are theſe things to be ſo ſtrictly underſtood, as if the wicked ſhould never eſcape out of any danger; for they ſometimes may call upon God, and he may have ſo much regard to their Prayers, as to take them out of the hands of their Enemies, who may be worſe than themſelves, to induce them to repent, and return to him and their Duty; they may humble themſelves before God, and he defer the Calamity to a further time, which he had threatned to bring preſently upon them: Thus upon the Humiliation of *Ahab*, who did evil above all that were before him, God delays the Execution of the Judgment he had denounced againſt his Houſe, unto the days of his Son.

Moreover, very bad men ſometimes do deeds of Charity and Mercy, and God ſuffers their few Good Works for a ſeaſon to cover their many Evil ones,

ſo

ſo that they are not always brought immediately to Light and Puniſhment.

God alſo may permit the Wicked to ſucceed in their Evil Deſigns in order to correct and reform his own People, when they truſt more in the Arm of Fleſh, than in God their Saviour; and when upon any loſs, or diſappointment, they grow uneaſy and ungrateful, and do not retain a due ſenſe of his great and manifold Mercies.

Laſtly, The Wicked often do proſper, and are ſuffer'd to climb high, not out of kindneſs to them, but that their fall may be the greater; and that the Divine Vengeance may be the more conſpicuous in their final overthrow.

Theſe things being premiſed, I proceed to obſerve, That Deliverances are of ſeveral ſorts, both with reſpect to them for whom they are wrought, and with reſpect to the Evils from which they ſet us free.

Some are confined to ſingle Perſons, or reach but to private Families, or Towns; and ſome extend to whole Countreys and Nations, indeed to all the Race of Mankind, as that Tranſcendent Deliverance in the Redemption of the World by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. And as the Redemption Chriſt did purchaſe for us with his Blood was the moſt comprehenſive, taking in the whole Stock of Men; ſo was it the moſt valuable, as reſcu-

ing

ing us from the power of Sin, which brought the Wrath of God upon us; and from the wages of Sin, everlasting Punishment, which is the greatest of Evils.

As to single Persons, God guards their Souls against the Designs of their spiritual Enemies, the World, the Devil, the Flesh, either by keeping them out of the way of the Tempters, or by enabling them to overcome their Temptations, so as they shall not be hurt, or led captive by them. It is also to the Goodness of God that particular men owe the preservation of their Health, Life, Reputation, and Estates: He defends their Lives from the malignity of Diseases, from the covetousness of Oppressors, who would kill, that they might take possession; from the malice of their cruel Enemies, that thirst after their blood; and from a vast number of dangerous Accidents, which are not to be imputed either to their own folly, or the ill will of other men.

He also protects the Reputation of the Innocent, and delivers them from the Slanders of lying Lips; he secures mens Estates, not only from the Assaults of Robbers and Thieves, but from the violence of Fires, Tempests, and Floods, and from all other Casualties.

But though there is no Creature so small and inconsiderable, that God does not take care of it; yet for the most part, the Acts of his Providence

are

are more apparent and diſcernable in the ordering and management of the greater portions of the World; his hand is more viſible in the government and diſpoſal of Countreys and Kingdoms, than of particular Places and Families; of Kings, and Men in Authority, than of private Perſons; whether in their ruin, when they turn their hearts from the Lord their God, and give themſelves up to commit evil; or in their Preſervation, when they do that which is right in his eyes, and keep the Covenants and Statutes which he has commanded them.

And it is to the extraordinary Providence of God, that we are beholden for this joyful Occaſion of aſſembling our ſelves together, who hath delivered our King from the hands of cruel and barbarous Men, that had conſpired to Aſſaſſinate and Murther his Sacred Perſon; and preſerved our Nation from an Invaſion, for which all things were prepared and made ready by a Powerful Neighbour, with deſign to conquer our Countrey, and to bring that Bondage and Slavery upon us, under which his own Subjects do labour and groan.

Had God, juſtly incenſed by our Iniquities, permitted theſe Helliſh Plots to have taken effect againſt the Perſon of our Dread Sovereign, and the Land of our Nativity, it is not eaſy to conceive the Fears, Horror, and Confuſion with which

which we ſhould have been overwhelmed; nor the Rage and and Cruelty with which our Enemies would have follow'd their Blow to have obtained a full Conqueſt, and made us compleatly miſerable.

We could with no reaſon have expected the leaſt degree of tenderneſs, or pity from them, who had ſo far diveſted themſelves not only of Religion, but Humanity it ſelf, as to murther the Father of their Countrey, under whoſe Protection they for many years had lived ſafely; neither ſhould we have had more ground to hope for favour from that Prince, by whoſe Arms we were to be invaded, who in his whole Conduct ſeems to have greater regard to the amplifying of his * Glory and Power, and the enlargement of his Dominions, than to the honeſty of his Cauſe, and the Rights of them with whom he does contend; and whoſe Mercy, or even Faith and Juſtice, the unhappy whom he has conquered, have no reaſon to applaud.

* *Who has ſuffered ſo many things to be ſaid of him, not only full of rank Flattery, but which ſavour much of Blaſphemy; viz.* Viro immortali, *p.* 42. Factis miracula firmat; totus me indiget orbis, *p.* 44. Nuſquam meta mihi; nuſquam devius, *p.* 45. Væ cui Iratus Jupiter, *p.* 47. Per ſe cuncta videt, *p.* 48. Qui nec errat, nec ceſſat, *p.* 54. Hiſtoire du Louis le Grand. Par les Medailles.

Neither perhaps are theſe Failings ſo much to be charged upon the Ambition of his Natural Temper, as upon an unenlightned Zeal he has to promote a Religion, which allows men to do very many ill things. For

For where Popery has a full Influence upon men, they will break through all Tyes, Natural, Civil, or Divine, to ſerve that Intereſt. Neither Laws, nor Edicts, nor Promiſes, nor Oaths, nor Vows, nor ſenſe of former Kindneſſes, have been found Bands ſtrong enough to hold them.

There are indeed Doctrines taught in that Church, which are great hindrances to good Life, and diſpoſe men to violate the Moral Duties of Nature and Religion, without any great ſhock of their Conſciences, or fear of Future Puniſhment. They get rid of their Fears by the Doctrines of Penance, Purgatory, * Maſſes for the Dead; and make their Conſciences eaſy by thoſe of Equivocation, Abſolution; and that they are not bound to keep the Faith they have engaged to Hereticks (which is the good Name they are pleaſed to give us), whom they will not allow to have any Right to Truth, or Juſtice, or ſo much as to their own Lives.

*Memorabilis eſt diſpoſitio Philip. IV. Hiſpan. Reg. quâ conſtituit ut 100000 Miſſæ ex ſua intentione dicerentur, & quidem ut ſi ipſe non amplius iis opus habeat, Patri ac Matri ſuæ bono cederent; ſed ſi hi jam in Cœlo eſſent; eorum animabus applicarentur, qui in Bellis Hiſpanicis mortem oppetierint. *Puffendorf de Conſ. & Diſſ. Proteſt. p.* 43.

Hereupon many of that Communion think it no Sin at all to kill us; and the moſt zealous and bigotted among them believe it a Good Work, and that they ſhall merit Heaven by doing God and their Church ſuch Laudable Service.

Since theſe Principles have found Entertainment in the World, what Havock has been made of the Lives of Men? what Effuſion of Chriſtian Blood?

During a ſhort Reign in our own Kingdom, Men and Women of Holy and Peaceable Lives, to a great number, were burnt at the Stake, becauſe they would not embrace Opinions deviſed by the Church of *Rome*, and impoſed for Articles of Faith, which are not contained in the Holy Scripture, nor known to the Primitive Chriſtians.

In the Countrey from whence we now were threatned with an Invaſion, as we are inform'd by ſome of their own [a] Authors, the Throats were cut of near a Hundred thouſand Proteſtants in the ſpace of a few days: When Tidings of it reach'd the Court of [b] *Rome*, his Holineſs the Pope received them with inexpreſſible Joy; [c] he went to St. *Lewis*'s Church in Proceſſion, to give God Thanks for the Succeſs; [d] heard Panegyrical Orations on that Occaſion with extreme Satisfaction and Pleaſure;

[a] *Hiſt. Hen.* IV. *Biſhop of Rodez. p.* 24.

[b] *Mezeray Hiſt. p* 722. Gregory XIII. Pontificatûs initia lætiora lætus de Pariſienſi Hugonotorum cæde nuncius fecit. *Hor. Turſellin. Soc. Jeſu, lib.* X.

[c] O diem illum plenum lœtitiæ & hilaritatis, quo tu, Beatiſſime Pater, hoc ad te nuncio allato, Deo Immortali, & Divo Ludovico Regi, cujus hæc in ipſo pervigilio evenerant, gratias actûrus indictas à te ſupplicationes pedes obiiſti. *Muret. Orat.* 22. *coram Pontifice Rom. habita* v. *Calend. Jan.* 1572.

[d] Quia neque ullum dicendi argumentum, hoc quidem tempore reperiri poteſt, in quo plus aut *dignitatis* aut *delectationis* ineſſe videatur, peto à te, Beatiſſime Pater, ut hoc temporis, quod mihi ad dicendum tua benignitate conceditur, in harum potiſſimùm rerum tractatione conſumi collocarique patiaris. *Muretus, ib.*

ſure ; [e] granted ample Indulgences, [f] and on a Medal ſtamp'd for that purpoſe, he cauſed this Helliſh Tragedy to be repreſented as the work of an Angel : Which none could have undertaken, before they had by a long cuſtom of ſinning brought themſelves to hope, that there were no Inviſible Powers, no Angels, nor God to obſerve the Wickedneſs of men, and to puniſh it.

[e] Edito ampliſſimæ indulgentiæ Diplomate, *Stradæ Bel. Belgic. lib.* 7.

[f] *Molinet. Hiſt. Summ. Pontific. Per eorum Numiſmata, p.* 93.

Queen *Elizabeth* ſat a long time on the Throne, lov'd and honour'd by her Subjects for her Wiſe and Righteous Government, and yet there was hardly any part of her Reign without a Plot carried on by her reſtleſs Enemies of that Religion.

At one time * ſeveral Gentlemen, Zealots of the *Roman* Church, ſome of whoſe Accomplices had undertaken to make out, That it was Lawful to take off Princes excommunicated ; and that if Right and Juſtice are ever to be violated, it is allowable in ſuch Caſes as tend to advance the Catholick Religion, did readily and chearfully enter into a Conſpiracy, and bind

* ——Aggregaverat quoſdam Nobiles Romanæ Religionis Studio inflammatos, *Cambden Eliz. p.* 405.

Conantur docere licitum eſſe principes excommunicatos è Medio tollere, & ſi jus violandum, Religionis Catholicæ Cauſa violandum, *Id. p.* 406.

Abingtonus, Barnwellus, Charnocus, & Savagius prompti & alacres in cædem jurant, *Ibid.*

themſelves by an Oath to Murther her Majeſty. But the Providence of God which now diſcovered the late Traitors, brought then their black Contrivances to light, and they ſuffered condign Puniſhment for them.

But of all bloody Deſigns that Popiſh Counſels have hatch'd, and they ſeem to outdo all others, there is none that had ſo contracted its Venom and Malignity together, like the Rays of the Sun in a glaſs, and which in the moſt compendious manner would have deſtroyed ſo many, and of ſuch high Quality, as the *Gunpowder Plot*. *Caligula* wiſh'd the People of *Rome* had but one Neck, that he might cut it off at one Blow; and the Horrible Cruelty which the *Pagan* Tyrant had only in his Wiſhes and Speculation, the Chriſtians of the Church of *Rome* would have put in Practice, and with one Stroke have killed the King, the Nobility, and the Repreſentatives of the People.

And is there not reaſon to believe, that the ſame Evil Spirit, which puſht on the *Romaniſts* in the days of our Fathers to ſuch horrid impiety, did govern theſe wretched Men in the Preſent Plot? which in ſome reſpect does exceed that former Treaſon. For at the ſame time that the Life of the King was to be taken away by Wicked

Wicked Traytors at home, there was an Army in readineſs to have made a Deſcent upon us from abroad, ſufficient not only to deſtroy the Lords, and the Commons, who repreſent the People, but the People themſelves; and there is great cauſe to think they would have made the Sword drunk with Blood, before they had put it up.

It is moſt unaccountable how any Proteſtant ſhould have been concern'd in it; and yet it cannot be denied, that ſome there were of that Religion, and Church, which abhorreth ſuch Doctrines; they were of that Church, but had departed from it, before they did engage in theſe Horrible Deſigns.

I ſay, it is unaccountable, ſince in the time of the late King they wiſh reſtored, their Religion, the Laws, the Rights, and the Liberties of the Nation, were in a manner all ſubverted; and the King, on whoſe Power all their hopes of reſtoring him are built, is one that cauſed all his own Proteſtant Subjects, who would not forſake their Religion, to be impriſoned, baniſht, or put to death; by which Severities he hath rooted them out of their Native Soil, and left no appearance of them in their own Countrey.

Is it to be thought he would treat Strangers more tenderly than he has done his own People? or that he would tolerate the Exercise of the Reformed Religion in this Kingdom after he had conquered it, who has extirpated it in his own, where his Subjects had a right by Law to enjoy it, and were not guilty of the least undutiful Behaviour to provoke him to violate their Rights?

And here I should have thought it necessary to do an Act of Justice to our Religion, in renouncing and disavowing the late Proceedings of those Clergy-men, who absolved two Persons that were condemned for Treason, and at their death shewed no tokens of Repentance for that Detestable Crime, as being contrary to the Doctrine and Practice of the Church of *England*, and scandalous to all good Christians in her Communion, had it not been done already, as far as can be in the present Circumstances, by the Bishops of the Church, and, I doubt not, with the hearty Concurrence of the rest of the Clergy.

While such Pernicious Opinions as these find favour in the World, and there are men bad enough to practise them, we have great need to fly unto God for Protection. We cannot reflect

flect upon the inhumane Slaughter intended both of our King, and of our People, without horror and deteſtation; we cannot think of our Wonderful Deliverance without hearts full of Joy, Praiſe, and Thankſgiving, ready to be offer'd to God our Gracious Deliverer.

Great is the Lord, and marvellous, worthy to be praiſed; there is no end of his greatneſs. Whoſo is wiſe, and will obſerve theſe things, even they ſhall underſtand the loving-kindneſs of the Lord. Men ſhall fear, and declare the works of the Lord; for they ſhall wiſely conſider of his doings. Pſal. 145. 3. 107. 43. 64. 9.

Indeed a little conſideration and thought will convince us, that all Deliverances, whether private or publick; whether of ſingle Perſons, or of whole Nations, are due to God. All men are ſenſible that they cannot preſerve themſelves; they find no power within them, either that was the cauſe of their being, or that can certainly ſecure their Eſtates, their Credit, or Friends, or prolong even their own Lives.

Men, ſeemingly to themſelves, and others, in ſound health, are in a day or two's time carried off by a Malignant Diſeaſe; Death ſurprizing them when they had ſet it at a great diſtance, and ſcarce allow'd it any room in their thoughts.

thoughts. So Thefts, and Fires, and other Accidents, * ſweep away their Eſtates, againſt which the niceſt Care and ſtricteſt Guards are no abſolute Security.

* Quem dies vidit veniens ſuperbum,
Hunc dies vidit fugiens jacentem.
Senec. in Thyeſte.

Greater Uncertainties do attend War and Peace, Publick Councils, and the State of Kingdoms: Counſels, through want of knowledge of many things, may be wrong taken; or the Wiſeſt by Treachery may be diſcovered, or defeated; ſmall circumſtances of things change the fate of Battels; things which were not obſerved, or ſo much as thought of when they began, and they that aſſured themſelves to return Conquerors from the Field, have been carried away Priſoners.

Such as pretend to be our Friends, may be plotting againſt us; and our trueſt Friends may not have skill and ſtrength to deliver us; or be out of the way, when we ſtand in moſt need of their help. And as we diſcover no ſufficiency in our ſelves, or Friends on Earth to ſave us from trouble and danger, ſo have we no ground or warranty to addreſs our ſelves to the Souls in Heaven of Saints departed; ſince we have no aſſurance they know how, or what we do; nor that they could help us, if they had knowledge of our Affairs.

Much

Much leſs can we apprehend how they ſhould hear the Prayers of ſome Millions of Perſons diſperſed thro' all Countries, put up at the ſame time: which is in effect to allow them Omniſcience, and Omnipreſence, two of the Properties of the Divine Nature. It is therefore intolerable Preſumption in the Writers of the Church of *Rome* to ſuppoſe ſuch Powers and Authorities to be lodged in the Virgin * *Mary*, and St. * *Ann* her Mother, and other Saints, which are peculiar to God himſelf.

* Tua enim omnipotentia manifeſtè oſtenditur, quia multos de ſua damnatione jam certos, multos in aqua præfocatos, multos ex improviſo mortuos, qui dum caderent tuo Patrocinio ſe commendârunt, liberâſti; multos etiam qui fine Pœnitentia deceſſerunt in peccato mortali, à diaboli faucibus eripuiſti, & ut poſſent agere pœnitentiam ad vitam reduxiſti. *Euſeb. Nieremb.* Tropæa Mariana, *p.* 7, 8.

Nomen Mariæ convenit nominibus Dei. 1. *El.* 2. *Eloha.* 3. *Elohim.* 4. *Sabbaoth.* 5. *Eloim.* 6. *Qui eſt, vel ſum quod ſum.* 7. *Adonai.* 8. *Jehova.* 9. *Saddai.* 10. *Tetragrammaton*, quod *Jehovah* pronunciant. *Biverus, de Privilegiis filiæ Dei Mariæ*, p. 165.

* Anna, abs te nequeunt mortalia pectora fruſtra
Poſcere, quodq; voles nata, Deúſq; volet. *Beiſelius in Roſar. S. Annæ.*

Cùm alii Sancti habeant ſuffragia à Chriſto impetrare ſuis devotis, per modum ſupplicationis, S. Anna autem ſicut Avia Chriſti habet jus imperandi & præcipiendi Chriſto, ſicuti etiam mater Maria, nec fas eſt negare quod poſtulat. *Pelbart de Temeſwaer*, Serm. 3. de S. Anna.

They muſt have very falſe Notions of God and of his Creatures, who imagine either that he can transfer, or that a Creature is capable of receiving thoſe Attributes, which are in their own nature incommunicable, and which without a Contradiction cannot be ſeparated from a Being infinitely perfect. There is therefore nothing we can firmly rely on, either for the ſafety of our Perſons, or the private Comforts of this Life, or the Publick Good of our Country, but God himſelf: Upon him it is we muſt

call in time of trouble, and he will deliver us.

The Heathens had such a just sense of humane Frailty, that they did attribute all the great Turns in their Condition to something above their own power. (*a*) To the Will of God they ascribed the good success of their Affairs, and hoped by his Aid to be delivered from Calamities. (*b*) That the happiness of his planting was the more durable. (*c*) That when he will punish, there is no escaping for the Strong. (*d*) That his displeasure might be appeased by their humbly addressing themselves to him. (*e*) And tho' sometimes they talk of the influence Fortune has over humane Affairs, yet they acknowledg it to be subject to the pleasure of God. (*f*) Wherefore in their Prayers they style God their Father, that is, the Author of their Life, Health, and Goods. (*b*) They dedicated Houses to Religious Uses, and had several kinds of Verses, which they appropriated to the Service of the Gods.

(*a*) Cum Divis volentibus, quod bene eveniat mando tibi. *Cato de re rustic.* cap 14.

Te sancte venerans precibus invicte invoco,
Portenta ut populo, Patria, verunc ent bene. *Non. Marcel.* c. 2.

(*b*) Σὺν θεῷ γάρ τι φύ|ευθεὶς ὀλ|ῷ ἀνθρώποισι παρ|μο|ώτερ|ῳ. Pindar, Od. 8.

(*c*) Ὅταν δέ τις θεῶν βλάπτῃ δυναίτ' ἂν οὐδ' ἰσχὺν φυγεῖν. Soph. Electr.

(*d*) Sæpe Jovem vidi cum jam sua mittere vellet
Fulmina, Thure dato sustinuisse manum. *Ovid.*

(*e*) *Aristotle* tells us, that the ancient Philosophers, who treated of the Original, and Corruption of things, did define nothing, or leave no Opinion concerning Fortune. --- That nothing proceeded from it---- That a Mind or Nature was precedent to it, and therefore necessarily, the first Cause of the Effects, not only ascribed to Fortune, but of the Universe. Οὐθεὶς γὰρ ἀρχαίων σοφῶν τὸ αὐτὸ αἴτιον ἔθηκε γενέσεως καὶ φθορᾶς λέγων, περὶ πύρης οὐδὲν διωρίσατο· οὐδὲν--- εἶναι-- ἀπὸ τύχης· ἀνάγκη πρότερον νοῦν εἶναι καὶ φύσιν εἶναι καὶ ἄλλων πολλῶν, καὶ τόδε τὸ παντός. Arist. Natur. Auscult. *l.* 2. *c.* 6.

(*f*) Omnem Deum, qui ab homine colitur, necesse est inter solemnes ritus, & precationes Patrem nuncupari, non tantum honoris gratia, verum etiam rationis; quod & antiquior est homine, & quod vitam, salutem, victum præstat ut Pater. *Lucilius apud Lactant.* lib. 4. cap. 3.

(*b*) Καὶ εἰς θεὸς ὃν ἀναφέρεσθαι ὕμνον, προσῳδίαν, πάταγα, διθυραμβον. Procli Chrestom. *p.* 7.

Gods. (*i*) Before Battles and after Victories they return'd them ſolemn Thanks, and part of the Spoils of War they devoted to God, and offered them in Sacrifice, as an acknowledgment that the event of things is in his diſpoſal.

(*i*) Hinc cum prælio dimicare conſtituerunt, ea, quæ bello ceperunt, plerunq; devovent, capta immolant, *Cæſar. Com.* lib. 6. Bello fœliciter confecto, gratias agi Diis, & ſupplicationes ad omnia pulvinaria haberi Senatus decernebat. *Liv. Hiſt.* lib. 30, 35, 37.

And though their Temples were ſtately and well adorned, and the Spices rich and ſweet which were burnt upon their Altars, and their Prayers accurately compoſed, yet the wiſeſt of them thought that the Piety, Innocence, and Purity of their Minds, would be more grateful and acceptable to God than the Coſtlineſs of their Sacrifices, and the Eloquence of their Language.

Οὐκ εἰκὸς τοὺς θεοὺς χαίρειν ταῖς δαπάναις ἧς δυομένων, ἀλλὰ ταῖς εὐσεβείας ἧς δυόντων. Ariſtot. Rhet. *lib.* 3.

Animadverto Deos ipſos, non tam accuratis adorantium precibus, quam innocentia, & ſanctitate lætari; gratiorémque exiſtimari, qui delubris eorum puram, caſtámque mentem quam qui meditatum carmen intulerit. *Plin. Panger.*

And theſe Notions which the Pagans had of God did reſult from the Idea and Conception of a Being infinitly perfect; for if God be Almighty, nothing can be brought about by any Power, which does not depend on his, and ſpring from him: So if he be Omniſcient, not any thing can come to paſs without his privity; no event can be caſual or uncertain with reſpect to him, who ſees and knows Effects while they are in their Cauſes, and diſpoſeth of them according to his good pleaſure: *For of him and through him, and to him are all things: To whom be Glory for ever.*

Πάντων πατὴρ, καὶ πάντα ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ ἔστι. Triſmegiſt. apud Suid. Rom. 11. 36.

Secondly, I proceed to ſhew that ſome Deliverances are more evidently from God, as having the plain and viſible Mark of his hand impreſt upon them.

Firſt, The glory of thoſe Deliverances more eſpecially are to be given to God which happen to Men without their own Wiſdom and Contrivance, and where they had uſed no precautions againſt them: When at the ſame time Men arrive at the knowledg of their danger, and of their deliverance, there can be no boaſting of their own foreſight, nor place to praiſe the Scheme of Policy formed by themſelves. God often ſurprizes his People with great Mercies, of which they had not the leaſt expectation, that they may not have ſo much as a pretence to thank any but him for them.

So our Preſervation from the late horrid Conſpiracy is not to be imputed to the Wiſdom of our Counſels, but to the Providence of God, which ſo awakened the Conſciences of ſome of the Malefactors, that they made a voluntary diſcovery of it. And that which ſhould more deeply affect us with our Eſcape, and engage us to give God greater Thanks for it, is, * That this execrable Plot was ripe for Execution, and the Blow ready to be given, when, by his Mercy, it was detected.

* Ut tanta repentè mutatio non ſine Deo videretur. *Saluſt.*

(2.) Thoſe Deliverances are to be looked on as coming more immediately from God, which we receive after no hope was left of flying from the Miſchief which was imagin'd againſt us: When altho' we might foreſeee the Storm, yet we had no power to ward againſt it, or to put it by. Tho' we might know our danger, yet it was too big for us, we were not able to deal with it; the little Strength we had to defend our ſelves, bearing no Proportion to the mighty Force of the Enemies who intended to aſſault us: Now to be ſaved after Men had deſpaired of a Deliverance, and when their Adverſaries were ſecure of a Conqueſt, muſt be owned to be the viſible Work of the Lord of Hoſts.

It is the wiſe Method of Divine Providence, often to let us miſcarry in thoſe Deſigns of which we were ſure and confident, and to bring thoſe good things to paſs of which we had no hope; both to convince us of our own Infirmity, and to induce us upon all occaſions to addreſs our Prayers unto him, who is able to ſave us in our greateſt Diſtreſs. Thus his People of old, *when in the time of their trouble they cryed unto him, he heard them from heaven, and according to his manifold mercies, he gave them ſaviours, who ſaved them out of the hand of their enemies*, Neh. 9. 27.

Πολλὰ ἄελπτα χραίνουσι Θεοὶ, ἵνα, δοκηθέντ' ἐκ ἐπελέσθη. Stob. p. 581.

This

This was our Condition before the late happy Revolution, when much Endeavour was uſed to ſuppreſs our Holy Religion, and to diſcountenance thoſe who profeſt it; when our Laws, that guard our Lives and Properties, were diſpens'd with, and the Yoke of Popery was ready to be ty'd on our Necks, and we ſaw no way of eſcaping, then, God, in his Goodneſs, was pleas'd to make His preſent Majeſty the great Inſtrument of our Preſervation.

(3.) The Providence of God is very apparent in theſe Deliverances which are brought to paſs by the Diſappointment of our own Counſels and Reſolutions, which, had they taken effect according to our Minds, wou'd have prov'd of dangerous conſequence to us; for ſo little do we ſee into things, that God often ſaves us, by fruſtrating the very Deſigns we had laid for our Preſervation.

And this holds as well in the Private Concerns of particular Men, as in the Publick Affairs of Nations: There is hardly any good Man, but in the Courſe of his Life, has found reaſon to thank God, for having deny'd him the things he had moſt ſet his Heart upon; he being ſenſible that much of the good Circumſtances of his preſent Conditi on is owing to his former Diſappointments: Nay, upon due Conſideration, wiſe Men are ſatisfy'd, that if they had had their Will in Matters that once

once they eagerly purſu'd, it wou'd have undone 'em. And the joyful cauſe of our preſent Solemnity is an eminent Inſtance of God's Mercies of this kind; for one Branch of our Deliverance is fully due to his Providence, which wou'd not permit us to put our own Counſels in execution; for had our Fleet purſu'd the Expedition, that was according to Human Underſtanding, prudently deſign'd, the Paſſage wou'd have been laid open for the Army that was in a readineſs to invade us; and there were but few Forces left then in the Kingdom, either to have hinder'd their Landing, or to have put a ſtop to their Progreſs.

(4.) We may manifeſtly diſcern the Hand of God in thoſe Deliverances which proceed from Cauſes over which we have no power. Of this ſort are all thoſe that are produc'd by the Wind, or the Sun, or the Rains, or the Froſt, or other remarkable Changes of Weather. Hiſtories of all Ages do teſtifie, that the greateſt Victories both by Land and Sea, have had their great Turn from thoſe things that were quite out of the command of the Mighty and the Proud, and were entirely directed by the Wiſdom of Providence.

Seafaring Men oblige themſelves to perform their Voyages to ſuch Ports, and by ſuch times, if the Wind and Weather favour them; that is,

if

if God pleaſes. And what is expreſly contain'd in their Contracts, is imply'd, and ought to be own'd in all Enterprizes relating to Affairs of higheſt Nature, and under the conduct of the wiſeſt Men.

Under the former Head of this Diſcourſe, we conſider'd our Deliverance, as proceeding from a Diſappointment of the Methods that were taken for our Defence; and here we obſerve, that that Diſappointment was caus'd by the Winds, and at that time alſo when we apprehended they blew againſt us, and in favour of our Enemies; inſomuch that if we had had them in our own keeping, and cou'd have made them move according to our mind, we ſhou'd have been expos'd to the utmoſt hazard of being over-run by a foreign Enemy.

Wherefore if we have no command over many of thoſe Cauſes which bring or ſtop Victories, and that contribute to the ſafety or deſtruction of Kingdoms; and if we had any Influence, might often uſe it to our own diſadvantage, let us look to God, from whom comes our help; Let us adhere to him in all the Changes of Life, to whoſe * Goodneſs and Power, we muſt attribute the Beginning, the Increaſe; and the Accompliſhment of all our Virtuous Deſigns; let us beg his Guidance in our Undertakings, and his Bleſſing upon them, without which they will come to nothing; and glorifie him, as

* Θεῖα αἰτία ἀρχὴ, τέλος, μέσον· ἧς δεῖ ἀντέχεσθαι, τοῦ μέλλοντας εὐδαιμονήσειν. *Iambl. de Sect. Pythag.*

as for all his Mercies, ſo particularly for this our Deliverance.

We come now to conſider by what Actions we ſhall glorifie God acceptably for theſe his gracious Diſpenſations, and make ſuch Returns as will pleaſe him.

(1.) We glorifie God by a ſincere acknowledgment that he, as has been prov'd, is the Author of our Preſervation, and that it was the Work of his Providence that our Enemies were diſcover'd, and put to ſhame, and that we have eſcaped out of the Snare they had laid for us. We muſt with thankfulneſs confeſs, that all our own Cares and Projects wou'd not have been ſufficient to preſerve us, had not God appear'd on our ſide; and that with leſs Preparations our Enemies might have deſtroy'd us, had not he fought againſt them.

God is greatly to be feared in the aſſembly of the ſaints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are round about him. In thy name ſhall they rejoyce all the day, and in thy righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted. For thou art the glory of their ſtrength, in thy favour our horn ſhall be exalted. For the Lord is our defence, and the Holy One of Iſrael is our King, Pſal. 89. 7, 16, 17, 18.

(2.) We honour God by ſtirring up in our minds a true Senſe of the Mercies we own he has done for us: We glorifie him when we reflect upon his

Works with Pleaſure and Joy, and have entire ſatisfaction in his adminiſtration of the Affairs of the World; when we heartily believe his Government to be Wiſe and Merciful, and that the croſſeſt Diſpenſations will turn to, and end in, the Advantage of his faithful Servants. There muſt be an agreeableneſs in all the Motions and Inclinations of our Hearts, to the ſenſe we have of God's kindneſs. After ſuch large Experiments of Faithfulneſs and Care, we ought not to diſtruſt his Providence in any future Difficulty or Danger; and when any unreaſonable Fear begins to lay hold of us, we muſt endeavour to baniſh it, by Reflections on the great things he has done for us already.

Neither ought we to repine at the Expences which are neceſſary for the defence of our Country, nor to murmur at Grievances which the wiſeſt Governments have never been able wholly to prevent; ſince how great ſoever they ſeem to us, they bear no Compariſon with the wonderful Mercies we have receiv'd.

(3.) We glorifie God when we are not content only with cheriſhing a ſecret Senſe of it in our Souls, but when we teſtifie before Men what marvellous Kindneſs he has ſhewn to us; when we lay hold of every opportunity to publiſh it to others, that our Friends, our Neighbours, and all good People,

People, may rejoyce together with us, and hence be encouraged to truſt in God, and to caſt their Care upon him.

But the higheſt Teſtimony of Publick Thankfulneſs is, to aſſemble our ſelves in the Houſe of God, and with united Hearts and Lips, to ſet forth his Praiſe. And if we do bring Minds fill'd with Love and Gladneſs, our Chriſtian Sacrifice will aſcend up into Heaven with a ſweet ſavour, ſuch as God will graciouſly receive: And the Angels, who ſhew ſo much Joy at the Converſion of Sinners, will be much more delighted with the Triumphs of the Saints, in aſcribing Glory to God.

(4.) We glorifie God by endeavouring to preſerve in our Memories theſe Deliverances of his, whereof at preſent we have ſo lively a Senſe: So that neither Buſineſs nor Pleaſure, nor length of Time, may wear them out of our Minds. It will paſs for a true Mark of the Honour we have for God, that his Favours have made ſo deep an Impreſſion in us, as will laſt all the Days of our Life: And when alſo we convey the Hiſtory of them down to our Poſterity, and afford them Matter of Thanks to render to him for the glorious Works of his Providence done not only in their own time, but in the Days of their Fathers.

Thus *what the people of Iſrael had heard, or known, or their fathers had told them, they were bound not to hide from their children, but to ſhew to the generations to come, the praiſes of the Lord; and his ſtrength, and his wonderful works that he had done, that the generations to come might know them, even the children which ſhould be born; who ſhould ariſe and declare them to their children; that they might ſet their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments*, Pſal. 78. v. 3---7.

(5.) We glorifie God by our humble Confeſſion that we did not deſerve the great and many Deliverances he has wrought for us; but that they were wholly due to his infinite Goodneſs. Such a ſincere Acknowledgment cuts off all pretence of Right to his Mercy; and the more we exclude our own Merit, the higher we exalt God's free Grace. And ſurely it much enhances the Kindneſs manifeſted in our preſent Eſcape, that God has ſnatch'd us, an ungrateful People, from the Brink of Ruin, who are ſo far from having any Claim to his Favours, as having ſerved him better than others, that we muſt aſcribe it to his infinite Goodneſs and Mercy, that the open Prophaneſs, avowed Irreligion, monſtrous Unthankfulneſs of ſo many amongſt us, have not yet provoked him to give us up, not only to our Luſts, but to the Fury of our bitter and implacable Enemies.

(6.) We

(6.) We glorifie God by letting the Mercies he has beſtow'd on our Country incline us to Love and Charity, and to be reconciled to one another. It is natural to imitate the Examples of thoſe we have in the higheſt eſteem; and if we really honour God in our Souls, we ſhall ſtrive to do like him in all Inſtances, wherein Creatures can copy after their Creator. By forgiveneſs of Injuries, by healing of Breaches, and renewing of Friendſhips, we do that good to one another, which God has extended to us all, and make our Behaviour much to reſemble his.

No courſe like this, will fix and continue his Favour among us, and encreaſe our ſtrength to reſiſt our Enemies. As nothing will more diſcourage and ruine the deſigns of wicked Men againſt us, than the firm Union of our Minds, and Affections, ſo nothing has given ſo much life to their hopes of making an eaſie Prey of us, as our Diviſions. Surely then the extraordinary care God has had of us, ſhould diſpoſe us to lay aſide all private Animoſities, and Self-ends, and heartily to join together in purſuit of the public Good.

We cannot but be ſenſible how much our King and our Kingdom have been under the peculiar Care of God. How often has God preſerved his Majeſty's Life, not only in the day of Battle from open Enemies, but from the execrable Conſpiracies of bloody Men, who would ſecretly have murther-

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ed him? The very Winds that now detained our Ships for the neceſſary guard of our Coaſts, did not long ſince lock up the Fleet of our Enemies, when they had framed a deſign to burn ours in the Harbour, and to cover the Deſcent they intended to make upon us.

And will not now every private Man thank God heartily on this Day for his ineſtimable Mercies, when by his Thankfulneſs, he will not only *work out his Salvation*, but effectually contribute to the Preſervation and Happineſs of the Country where he lives? Shall we not praiſe God with all our Soul, when the ſo doing will not only purchaſe us a Reward in the other World, but is attended with preſent Bleſſings, and is the way alone to ſecure to our Nation God's Aſſiſtance and Protection in future times? To render Thanks to the Lord for his loving Kindneſs will give Cheerfulneſs to our Spirits, when things have an ill Aſpect; Courage to our Hearts, and Strength to our Hands in the greateſt danger; and tho' all Men, Pagans as well as Chriſtians are convinced that there can be no acceſſion to * God's infinite Glory by the Acts of our Honour, yet they are ſenſible that the ſincere performance of this Duty does diſpoſe God to love them, and to do good to them, and does prepare their Hearts for, and

* Veterum ſanctiſſimorum hominum exempla ſecutus: Illi enim, quod alimenta, patriam, lucem, ſe deniq; ipſos Deorum dono habebant, ex omnibus aliquid Diis ſacrabant; magis adeo ut ſe gratos approbarent, quam quod Deos iis arbitrarentur indigere. *Cenſorin. de die Nat.* cap. 1.

open

open and enlarge their capacity to receive his Benefits.

And things being ſo, ſhall we not think our ſelves highly obliged by our public Praiſe and Thankſgivings, to contribute what we can to maintain that Cauſe, which God has been pleaſed to make ſo much his own? Should we not be all ready to join our Heads, our Hearts, our Hands, our Affections and utmoſt Endeavours to ſerve his Majeſty for our own Preſervation? Should we not above all things every one do his Part, when God has been graciouſly pleaſed, as it were without our asking, to ſhew himſelf on our ſide, now to engage him to continue with us? which is impoſſible otherwiſe to be hoped for, than by promoting a general Reformation.

Which if any one is yet to begin, that has any Generoſity in him, from whence ſhall he chuſe to date it, rather than from ſuch a day as this, a day when we are to thank God for ſuch extraordinary, ſuch wonderful Deliverances, as we have not ſeen the like given to any other People, the common Deliverance of our King and our Nation, of our Bodies and our Souls; and not only of our ſelves, but of our Poſterity. Surely whoſoever has any ſenſe of Gratitude moving in him, cannot but feel it move powerfully in his Heart at this time, to glorifie God, as he demands it in our Text, *I will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorifie me.*

Now

Now to join our Prayers together with our Thanksgivings, *May God be graciously pleased to preserve the King's Person, which has been so often exposed in the Defence of ours; may he whom Providence has guarded against so many Swords, and so many Bullets, in the Field, and in the Trenches; never to be taken off by Poison; or fall by the vile Hand of any barbarous Assassine; may all his People Love and Serve him; and may he long live to defend the Establish'd Church, the Laws and Rights of these Realms; the Reformed Religion; and to restore Peace to the Christian World, upon good and lasting Foundations: And in the end, for all his Righteous Labours, may he receive a Crown of Glory.*

FINIS.

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TWO Sermons of the *Wisdom* and *Goodness* of Providence, Preach'd before the Queen at *White-hall*, *August* 17. and 24. 1690. on *Prov.* 3. 6.

A Sermon Preach'd at St. *Andrew's Holborn*, *June* 28. 1691. on *Gal.* 6. 7.

Of Religious Melancholy: A Sermon Preach'd before the Queen, at *White-hall*, *March* 6. 1691. on *Psal.* 42. 6.

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These by the Right Reverend Father in God *JOHN* Lord Bishop of *Norwich*.

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